

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

In view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks, the applicants respectfully submit that the pending claims are not rendered obvious under 35 U.S.C. § 103. Accordingly, it is believed that this application is in condition for allowance. **If, however, the Examiner believes that there are any unresolved issues, or believes that some or all of the claims are not in condition for allowance, the applicants respectfully request that the Examiner contact the undersigned to schedule a telephone Examiner Interview before any further actions on the merits.**

The applicants will now address each of the issues raised in the outstanding Office Action.

Objections

Claim 12 is objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Since claim 12 has been rewritten in independent form to include each of the elements of claim 11, from which it depended, this objection should be withdrawn.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claim 11 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,332,075 ("the Verdonk patent") in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,442,684

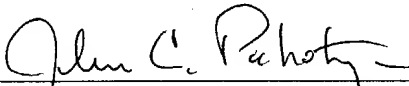
("the Hashimoto patent"). Since this claim has been canceled, this ground of rejection is rendered moot.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, the applicants respectfully submit that the pending claims are in condition for allowance. Accordingly, the applicants request that the Examiner pass this application to issue.

Respectfully submitted,

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CERTIFICATE OF MAILING under 37 C.F.R. 1.8(a)

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited on **July 22, 2004** with the United States Postal Service as first class mail, with sufficient postage, in an envelope addressed to Mail Stop Amendment, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.



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